



Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association

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DATE: October 15, 2009
TO: Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice
FROM: Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association
RE: Assembly Bill 324

Fire departments and emergency medical services in Wisconsin have no laws to keep impersonators of firefighters and emergency medical technicians away from emergency scenes. There are laws against impersonating a law enforcement officer, which can be used to arrest and prosecute those that impersonate law enforcement officers. Assembly Bill 324 would provide the same provisions for impersonating a firefighter and an emergency medical technician.

There are many incidents of persons impersonating firefighters and emergency medical technicians where the person has been caught on the scene but the police officer reports that there is no law to charge the impersonator. These impersonators often operate from a scanner and occasionally arrive on the scene of an emergency prior to the arrival of the fire department or ambulance. With little to no training these impersonators can seriously harm a patient by rendering inappropriate care and in the case of a fire cause more damage to the property with in appropriate actions. The public is at risk with impersonators operating freely with no law to restrict their actions.

The Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association asks that the committee support Assembly Bill 324. If you have questions please contact Dave Bloom, Legislative Liaison, Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association at 608-444-3324.

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